

BOZART and Contemporary Verse

Combining JAPM and The Oracle

EDITED BY ERNEST HARTSOCK

ASSO. ED. BENJAMIN MUSSER



MAY-JUNE, 1930

BOX 67, STATION E, ATLANTA, GA.

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By Ernest Hartsock

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AGAIN, HERO

So much has been said by the critics in recent days about the dangers of rhetoric and so much has been implied about the grand manner, that any poet of our generation who departs from the elaborate but sterile simplicity of Robinson or the colloquial quiescence of Frost is in immediate danger of decapitation on the charge of ambition. And while we have no intention to champion the rule of vacuous bombast, we have the desire to call to the notice of these critics, our friend Howard Mumford Jones among them, that the idea of great poetry demands the heroic gesture.

"Rhetorical to a fault," say the critics about this poet and that. But sweet are the uses of rhetoric to those who know the ways. As we see it, *rhetoric*, in the generally accepted and derogatory sense of the word is supposed to convey the idea of superficial or false elegance induced by a desire for impressive diction. If this is true, the poets who err in the direction of rhetoric have at least exhibited a rather laudable aspiration as regards technique, which is more than can be credited to some. They have, further, the history of English poetry, which glorifies Milton as surely one of the three greatest of our tongue. And Caesar was ambitious. . . .

What lines from Shakespeare are most frequently quoted as evidences of his surpassing genius? What lines from Marlowe? What is there to the immortal line, "To march in triumph thru Persepolis," but rhetoric pure and simple? Exaltation of the spirit is by nature oratorical; thus Whitman is rhetorical. Thus any poet with mental and philosophical integrity feels the impulse to soar, and soaring isn't a matter of monosyllabics alone. It is robust and sonorously barbaric.

There is always the danger of forcing an effect. There is always the peril of overstatement. But, alas, how few are the men whose imaginations are sufficiently virile to overleap tradition! Intensity can be chastened and subdued to exquisite reticence; but how can the laconic ever be raised to the Heroic? After all, is not understatement sentimentality, as well as overstatement? Is courage not the virtue of Prometheus? Courage in the use of words is very close to genius. . . . Of course, the South has suffered from its romantic illusions of grandeur; it has languished in the stultified tradition of Poe. But it has retained relatively intact one feature of poetry which in the larger and more sophisticated centers of culture has become a matter of laughter: The epic accent. The epic demands faith and fire and fortitude. It is not written by dilettantes.

And as great a handicap as the heroic mood has been to the poets of the South in some ways, it may yet produce in a world of tawdry and threadbare disillusion a poetry of affirmation, not too self-conscious to be heroic—a poetry which has the elements of greatness and prophetic integrity.

—E. H.

PEOPLE IN HIGH HOUSES

Here the high houses push up thin and pale
Like the grasses climbing under stones.
No one would look for any living here
But a living built of monotones.

The people have the daylight at their call
In the sanctuary of the holy night,
Winter is a name in ancient tales
And the Spring too common to be right.

They love the flowers under glass, profane
The ancient pageantry of night and day,
Mock the months that dance the dance of life,
And cast the chemistry of God away.

Music is a matter of a turn
Of a dial, ground in many mills,
These people walk no weary miles to come
Upon the broken hearts of whippoorwills.

They fear to be alone and face themselves
In the hours when the lonely ones grow strong;
For them life is a purely personal thing,
And death is something singular and wrong.
—ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN.

SUMMER TWILIGHT

The glint of sun on wings, far off and high,
When light is fading here, the secret way
A brook, unseen, has nearly reached the sky
Before the flash of radiance comes, delay
The twilight long enough for us to know
Completion—that the boughs of distance took
The wings to rest, that only stars should grow
Along the shining gesture of the brook.

We stare across a twilight of our own
And strain our eyes for something still a part
Of us—though we have faced the sky with stone
And tempered armor for the vulnerable heart
And fooled the mind with baubles—needing birth
Again to ancient verities of earth.

—GLENN WARD DRESBACH.

BIRD OF SILVER

The lark we please to name divine,
Is still a shadow on the sun,
Just as it was in other days,
When music smote young Tennyson.
The liquid and exultant note,
Is still an opal in her throat.

And poets turn to love again
And write their starry verses still,
Because this Sappho of the sky
Sings on above an emerald hill.
The bracelets of the wind still hum
Against her bright delirium.

Young Tennyson beside your sea,
How many years ago were you
A captive to this crazy one.
Still breaks a frenzy through the blue
And wakes the pearl of morning there
Because a lark is in the air.

—HAROLD VINAL.

BLIND

Wise as he was in all the ways
Of rain and sun and length of days,
Of seed and shock and furrow; knowing
As he was in the ways of growing,

He never loved the soil as one
Who might have called himself a son
Of Certainty that sends a tree
Upspringing to Infinity,

Nor ever stopped within a wood
To ponder on the Wholly Good
Of that which trembles in the vast
Green shadow of the First-and-Last.

In that Eternal Circle of
Sowing and reaping, rain and love,
Death and re-birth, he never found
One clod of Cause in all his ground.

—WILLIAM WRIGHT.

TRIAL BY FIRE

I.

Taut on the rack, he lifted still a fragile,
Intrepid challenge to the winds of anguish,
Serenely sure the grim Promethean vigil
Some day must end; the inquisitors extinguish
Their fires; and he arise from the Spartan nurture
Erect and lean as one new-proved in battle;
All of his dross refined away by torture,
Leaving unscarred the bright invincible metal.

How should amorphous stone dispute the logic
That guides the cunning surgery of the chisel
To prisoned beauty? How resent the tragic
Decree of agony endured to dazzle
Earth with new loveliness—of death that frees,
Pang by slow pang, the hidden Hercules?

II.

So we go briefly armored through the ominous
Ambush of years; and still, betrayed and frustrate,
Assume a purpose recondite but luminous
Behind the bludgeonings that lay us prostrate;
Doomed in the end to learn, with laggard candor,
The pattern that evaded our discovery
Was never shaped; the man of fire-proved splendor
Never conceived, or strangled in delivery.

Better the blind, for whom the valiant gesture
Holds import still, who ever know the tedious
Chisel's attrition for a cruel imposture
And not the god-releasing craft of Phidias,
Than we, poor maimed Prometheans, groping back
To find our altars fouled, our hearthfires black.

—TED OLSON.

SKEPTICISM

My faith an ancient pocket where
I kept thought's hands till they were warm,
Then, like a braggard, I would dare
Expose them to doubt's sleet and storm.

But fabric of whatever cost
If overstrained reveals a slit.
Thought's fingers know the bite of frost;
Faith's pocket has a hole in it.

—JOHN RICHARD MORELAND.

IN ARKANSAS

Around the cabin shift
The ducks and geese
And through the open door
The chickens drift.

"Maw, wher's my shoes?" Lem lumbers in and at
The bureau tries to think which tie to choose.
"Wher 'bouts yuh goin', Lem?"

"The store, I guess."

"Fer that y'u ain't been primpin' up afore.
Hain't Betty Skiff y'u'r goin' courtin'?"

"No,

Hit ain't."

"Watch out! I heerd y'ur paw say if
Y'u got to courtin' her—an' marryin'—
Y'ud hev to go to work supportin' her."

"Well, don't yuh s'pose I'd work if I had to?"
"Yuh better think hit over. . . . Ther's y'ur
clothes."

A hound dog flips his nose between his paws.
A kitten frisks. A rooster flaps his wings and
crows.

'Maw' shews him from the door, peers down the
road:

"That's twice t'day; somebody's comin', shore."
Lem, dressed: "Maw, gimme dime."

"What fer?"

"Jes 'cause."

"Now, ther' y'u go, a spendin' all the time."
She watches him prim down the short-cut path;
When at the fence he hesitates, 'turns roun',
Springs over, fingering the dime, and thinks:
"Durn funny how she knowed!"

'Maw' sees him climb

The ridge and chuckles, 'sidlin'-up' the steps:
"Jess like his paw. . . . Oh, well, he's got his
idlin'

To do like all the rest the young. An' if
He marries her hit may be fer the best."

A wasp, on busy wings,
Flies through the room,
And from a leaning snag
A bluebird sings.

—HILLIARD WIGHT.

ROCK SENTINEL

Across the sands of Kerry
Into the west it peers
As it has peered for over
A thousand-thousand years.

The Norseman saw it looming,
The Spaniard watched it gaze
When his dispersed Armada
Swept round those wild dark ways.

Gray with the grime of ages
It lifts its head sublime,
Inscrutable as space is,
Immutable as time.

A symbol of the Godhead
That one day bade it be
Eternal ward and watcher
Of the unstable sea.

—CLINTON SCOLLARD.

DELINQUENT MOTHER

"Safe in the arms of Jesus"
She sings in ecstasy;
And prays for every sinner
Both long and fervently.

She has a wayward daughter
Who lured by lies and cheats
Is going to the devil
On midnight's lighted streets,

And boys in Court for stealing—
She needs to cut the wails;
Take firm grip on her children;
Let go of God's coat tails.

—A. B. LEIGH.

INQUIRY

Fine old lady
In your elegant car,
Could you ride my wagon
Hitched to a star?

—G. ERSYL MANAHAN.

THE ROUND BARN

He was a mountain man, a weathered fellow,
With something in his face you might remember,
The eyes wide set, the mouth a bit too mellow,
Like windfalls in the ryegrass in September.
Where the road forked he builded him a barn,
(All custom riddled and convention routed,)
A queer lone shape, its shadow in a tarn,
A round red barn even the swallows doubted.

They pointed at him then. He set his plow
Down the same furrow on the north slope where
His corn must grow. They could not fancy how
A man would tire of barns oblong or square;
And still they ponder why, an autumn after,
He wore a smile, a rope's length from a rafter.

—MINNIE HITE MOODY.

AT CHURCH

On Sunday I may wear my rosebud dress
My shiny slippers and my sash, unless
It rains; and then I wear my speckled brown
And keep my rubbers on.

Our pew is way up front so God can look
At me while I sing from the book;
I feel the floor all shaky with each note
Inside the organ's throat.

The painted window lets the green and blue
And gold and purple shining lances through;
The minister looks green—he doesn't care,
He has to lead the prayer.

There are so many things to think about
In Church! My Mother's dress is inside out
And *dyled*—and everybody thinks it's new,
The way she meant them to.

Old Mister Snyder has a brand-new wig—
It's kind of crooked; guess it is too big;
Aunt Hannah is asleep, I heard her snore—
I wonder what she thinks a Church is for?

—MAY CARLTON LORD.

FOR TWO FORGOTTEN CHILDREN

So many days we climbed that hill,
And made our fire and ate our fill
Of charred potatoes from the ash,
Or dared the stinging scratch and lash
Of brambles for the blackberries,
Or talked of towering mysteries.
Telling the long tales told before,
Racking our little brains for more.
Caesar and Gaul and Britons, blue
Stained with woad, and Vikings, too,
Helmeted; the crested prows
Of long ships, and the Templars' vows;
Bright breasted Brigid; the Boyne Water,
Two-handed swords and bloody slaughter.
Leprechauns, and fairy rings,
And laughing, fighting Irish kings.

The dogs would chase an imagined rabbit
From nothing more than force of habit.

Far down below, the lough was bright
As sapphires in the broad sun light.
We'd loot the hazel copse and angle
For sticklebacks, bent pins a-dangle
In the brook, and there we'd linger
Until night drew a warning finger
Over the sky. Then we would scurry,
Slipping and tumbling in our hurry
Homeward again, our jersies knobbly
With hazel nuts all hard and cobbly.

I wonder if I dare return—
I, who have still so much to learn
Of fading colors and hills grown small—
I could not bear it changed at all.

—DOROTHY MACFARLANE.

REFLECTION

You may walk with your eyes on the sidewalk
Hunting a dime till you die,
But I'd rather fall in a mud hole
Than never to see the sky!

—RUSSELL MERIWETHER HUGHES.

COME, THERE IS RAIN

Come, there is rain, a hesitant fall on the meadow,
One grass blade is bent, one has a tremble of light,
The plumbtrees stand vague, with hardly a shadow
To darken the ground, where last-moon's petal
 white
Has browned.

Eastward go winds, with the black flapping of
 crows to follow,
Wind on the clover, tilting rainward the bleak
 side of leaves,
And darkness with rafters of rain in a groundhog's
 hollow,
The glooming of pines, whereon the blotted half-
 light grieves
And reclines.

Come, there is rain, let us walk pond-ward through
 the furrow,
Rain trapple gone soft on the clay, rain drum on
 corn blades,
Rain smell on dust and heavier far on the mole's
 last burrow,
Forgetting the sun, and tasting a calm which
 wavers and fades
When half begun.

—DAVID CORNEL DEJONG.

TEMPERAMENT

His energy made fuel of fatigue
To drive his incandescent act and will;
Audacities of purpose were in league
With cosmic forces. Nothing was more still
Than he, at rest; but when he played or fought
The devil was in him. Art set him alight.
Chess plunged him into strategies of thought.
He could review three dramas in one night;

And loved at the same pitch . . . without deceit
He uttered phrases facts could not redeem.
There was no way to stabilize his word.
Inflated promises were his defeat
When time collapsed his speculative dream,
And wrote him off, insolvent and absurd.

—GRACE STONE COATES.

NIGHTSHADE

She found a house by a lonely road
With a singing frog and a slimy toad.

She moved the kettles and dishes in
She cleaned the house and thought it a sin

For a man-made woman to live alone
A woman neither of stick nor stone.

She hung a lantern high in a tree
High enough for a man to see.

He saw the light and knocked on the door
And said: "Let it be as it was before!"

She said: "Come in and light the lamp
While I walk down to the edge of the swamp

To find some berries sweet and black.
Sit right down, I'll soon be back!"

He ate the stew and said: "You witch!
This is no food for man or bitch!"

He ate the stew and the crows cried
And the woman laughed when the man died.

—BORGHILD LEE.

IN A MONASTERY GARDEN

Full forty years too late he learned the cost
Of being virtuous to the extreme.
At last he realized that he had lost
In this, God's labyrinth, the thread of dream.

It broke . . . (The ravelled end he could remember:
A living virgin, not one made of plaster;
The devil in him blowing on the ember,
A scarlet prelude and a gray disaster.)

He would go back to her—he swore he would—
When rage subsided to a drooling pout;
He almost killed them when he understood
That, even dead, they would not let him out.

A shot that broke the stillness like thin glass
Opened a tiny hole for him to pass.

—RONALD WALKER BARR.

THE MAN WHO BROKE THREE HEARTS

The man who broke three women's hearts
Sits and mends his slipshod carts,
Without a collar, growing gray,
Slacker still from day to day.

He had his wife and one wife other
And the girl he left to mother
A son to mind her of the time
When he went in all his prime.

The pity is he never knew
The beauty that filled out each thigh,
Kept him lean, and made him please
Women with his scornful ease.

He never guessed the women panted
For more than handsome bodies granted,
Never really knew that fire
Stood on the oil of his desire.

So pitiful it is to know
That one who walked where gods might go
And played a rôle the stars might act
Had no inkling of the fact.

Now he sits and fumbles round
Who sent three women underground,
Smokes a mellowed pipe; no wise
Wrinkles lie around his eyes.

He cuts the hay on runout places;
His thickening thighs have lost their graces,
The stubble's on his chin save Sundays;
He has a growing dread of Mondays.

The country shop his father ran
Is managed by a better man.
His food tastes better, that is clear;
His horse is leaner year by year.

He likes to egg the young men on,
Now his own pith's dried and gone.
His vacant days stretch on ahead
And longer mornings in his bed.

—ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN.



THE MAN WHO
BROKE THREE HEARTS

By Herbert Daugherty



PRISONER 26—ROAD GANG

For forty years the insistent rain,
The intrepid sun had set their seal
Upon the shallows of his brain;
The deeper cells forgot the feel

Of thought that stirs the passive blood
And sows its seed that the mind may reap.
His body alone must ask for food .
And the brief renaissance of sleep.

. . . . The teeth of forty years can eat
The frail flesh from the stubborn bone
When ever and ever the hammers beat
Their endless rhythm against stone,

When ever and ever the hammers choke
Out of a dry throat ragged breath
And day after day stroke follows stroke
As slow as pain, as sure as death. . . .

So when the forty years were done
And they sent him back to peace and rest,
How much was man, how much was stone
The ones who knew him never guessed.

The tiredness of his heart received
The gentle fields, the sheltering tree,
And no one then would have believed
How strange and fearful peace may be

To him who has not seen her face
For more than forty laggard years.
It takes an acid to erase
A memory that is etched in tears.

Then, out of quietness, there came
A rhythm that he knew too well,
A rhythm that he would not name,
Beating a rocky road to hell.

For, being free at last, he found
The weary mind still bore its chain—
There was no freedom from the sound
Of hammers thudding in his brain.

—SARAH LITSEY.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN

The vows I made fair Imogene
In gardens brimmed by rose and moon
Had lost no potency with Jane
In crowded city streets at noon.

At dawn, at dusk, at luncheon time;
In garth, and room and trolley car
Above my head there always hung
A Casanovan lucky star.

I can remember vaguely now
Some of their names, the hackneyed lines.
And I could paper half a house
With all their scented valentines.

Yet now from having sipped so long
From what had been my Holy Grail,
I do not wonder any more
Queen Guinevere should take the veil.

—ISAAC BENJAMIN.

DAWN INTERVAL

Dawn, be careful
Lest you break
The black crystal
Of this lake—
It is so still,
So limpid-thin
With a wedge of moon
Set in.
Swallow, wait
Beneath your eaves!
Willow, willow
Stay your leaves!
Lily, do not open,
Nor
Heron, wade out
From the shore.
Beauty is so fugitive
Let this perfect moment
Live.

—ETHEL ROMIG FULLER.



PASTURE ON PARNASSUS

By ERNEST HARTSOCK



Droll Parade, by Carlton Talbott (*Horace Liveright, New York. \$2.00*)

When Carlton Talbott wrote *Ballyhoo for a Mendicant*, he produced a style of ribald clowning indisputably his own; his new book carries on the same effects, sometimes with success and sometimes without. His triumph is ever the almost pedantic reconnoitering for flavorful proper names: Grimalkin, Asmodeus, Salamander, Petiperl, Hippogriff, Titti-villus, and a score of other grotesque mannequins gibber and gloat for page after page of bawdy nonsense. Folk-stories and fairy tales yield much material for the sly versifier. Yet one feels somehow more often in this collection than in the former one that Talbott must occasionally descend to being naughty "to annoy because he knows it teases." Some of the poems are out of the author's range; "Initial Tour," for instance, is quite bad light verse. Talbott's success depends upon his fidelity to broad-vowelled, bourgeois balladry; let us hope that he will avoid the journalese harlot that drags most light-versifiers into the quagmire of dilution.

The Cycle of Modern Poetry, by G. R. Elliott (*Princeton Univ. Press. \$2.50*)

Taking up the academic quest for Humanism, Prof. Elliott includes in this series of very loosely integrated essays discussions which all tend to exalt Milton and to minimize the followers of rationalism and imagism. Unfortunately, one has the most difficult time in discovering just what the author's opinions are, if any, as concerns "Modern Poetry." His knowledge of the moderns appears to start at Whitman, whom he puts second to Longfellow, and to end at Robert Frost, whom he endorses because he is opposed to the humanitarian fallacy so assiduously assailed by the New Humanists. Social realism is what they want; Naturalism is what they don't want. They want "Personality," not "Individuality." They want, as nearly as we are able to decipher from the remarkable accumulation of oxymoronic paradoxes of Prof. Elliott, more emphasis on "the soul." One definition may (or may not) serve to clarify this collegiate and scholastic attitude: "Poetry is an imitation of the whole art of personality." Let's see if that helps you to write a poem. . . .

The Secret Bird, by Jessie B. Rittenhouse (*Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston. \$2.00*)

Patterns of silver magic are the best of the lyrics in this new assortment of verses by the veteran anthologist, Jessie Rittenhouse; such

simply phrased, such tender and intrepid lines as are found in "Only Beauty" or in "The Arrows" sustain ably the reputation which Miss Rittenhouse established in her earlier work. A true ear for verbal music and an apperception of pathos place her in the van of the leading women lyricists of America, alongside Teasdale and Millay. But, in comparative connection with her contemporaries, Miss Rittenhouse is quite definitely of the romantic traditional school; she seldom avoids an inversion, and sometimes fails to avoid a cliché, as in the "Silver Bird" where the last two lines fail to deserve the much-abused exclamation mark. Her subject matter is within the limits of the personal melody; sadly she sings authentic songs in the authentic lyric manner, like the secret bird whose voice is a flower of sound on a high tree at evening.

The Roosevelt and the Antinoe, by E. J. Pratt (*Macmillan*. \$1.50)

"This is a veritable epic," remarks Mr. Ballyhoo, plucking out one of the pricks of conscience and neatly putting it in the Reviewer's chair. "A mounting, surging, poetic record of a great rescue at sea." Listen, my children and you shall hear: (the radio—)

"The cabin of the roosevelt radio!

Three dots, three dashes, and the dots again—

(The call sign) *British freighter, Antinoe,*

Don't know position. Sixteen hours ago,

Rough latitude—thirty-nine, five-eight.

Been hove-to ever since; the present rate

Of drift to East, two knots (approximate)."

Isn't that the true Homeric strain? And modern, too. It rhymes, too. And, my dear, "The descriptions recall Masfield's 'Dauber,'" or so the Company says. And the Company (You know, *Macmillan*—I think the *Mac* is Scotch)—My dear, they should know an epic! (You can always tell one by its length.) And these lines, too,—such rush and power and glamor and—and—pep!

"During the night the fact was plain the gun

Would by such lavish firing soon outrun

The standard stock of carriers and consume

The packing cord; so in the engine room

A humming lathe was making up arrears, etc."

This book must be read to be appreciated. . . . Nothing quite like it. You know.

The Red Harvest, edited by Vincent G. Burns (*The Macmillan Co.* \$3.75)

In harvesting all of the poems in the English language written about the recent World War, and in offering as corroboration of their sentiment the voices of earlier poets protesting against conquest and carnage, Vincent Burns has done a useful and laudable service for poets. He has helped to dispel the rather too general impression that poets have all ultimately thrilled to the blare and bombast of battle, writing such emotional hemorrhages as the "Star-Spangled Banner" and the "Marseil-

laise." This volume, containing work by almost every leading American and English poet from Siegfried Sassoon to Stephen Benet, presents a sanely excellent prose introduction, followed by carefully compiled sections which deal with each phase of war. The book suffers from only one major fault: it contains much verse which is interesting merely as an expression of commendable sentiment and not as poetry proper. A number of the selections by the minor American poets are convincing propaganda in verse, and nothing more. Their voices are, however, resonant because of their unison.

The Golden Stallion, edited by D. Maitland Bushby (Southwest Press, Dallas, Tex.)

Verse written about the Southwest by poets living in the Southwest is collected in Bushby's attractive anthology; such distinguished poets as Robinson Jeffers, Mary Austin, and Glenn Ward Dresbach mingle with the highly promising voices of John Knox, Lillith Lorraine, and Arthur Truman Merrill to make a mosaic with color and pattern. If the poems as a whole have any general tendency, it is their detached and purely pictorial aspect. They appear to be in the main not interpretations so much as photostatic reproductions without much sky-riding toward epic intonations. They have, however, technical sufficiency and authentic local color, even if Omar Barker and others wax rather too near the Kiplingesque in their cowboy ballads. Among the better poems are those of Hildegard Flanner, Ted Olson, Charles Erskine Scott Wood, and Sara Bard Field. Virginia Spates, Grace Stone Coates, Norman Macleod, Lexie Dean Robertson, Whitney Montgomery, Idella Purnell, and Witter Bynner are some of the other established contributors.

The American Scrap Book, 1930, edited by Wm. Griffith (Forum Press, New York)

The collection of a scrap-book, like the assembling of any anthology, is in its final analysis a highly personal matter; its inclusions depend rather considerably upon the individual tastes of its editor, and are generally as broad as his opinionations will permit. Fortunately Mr. Griffith is a man of wide and cultivated interests; consequently his second *Scrap Book* is an adequate mirror of American literary, social, and philosophic thought during 1929. The poems in the book have diversity and in many cases importance; one cannot help wishing, though, that "God's Grey Pocket" by Anne Blair, and Malcolm Cowley's "Tumbling Mustard" had been replaced with some of the representative work of Mark Van Doren or Hart Crane. . . . However, when there is so much that is good, so much intelligent selection of crisp and varied material in one book, one cannot cavil. *The American Scrap Book* is worth anybody's time and money.

Five Harrison Books (Henry Harrison, New York)

The idea behind *One for Posterity*, the selection of one poem by each poet in the anthology as the author's best poem, is by no means a

reprehensible idea; in fact, if the poets included in this auto-selection were representative, the result might be highly edifying. Unfortunately, most of the poems in this collection are third-rate. Even the poems from *Forum*, *Century*, *Good Housekeeping*, are barely second-rate; there are in all 145 contributors. *If I see Green*, by Tallulah Ragsdale is a book of traditional verses; it indicates talent and acceptable technique, but little originality of treatment or intensity of mood. *Singing Davids*, an assortment of verses by fifteen poets (at \$35 each) contains a few poems of promise by Isobel Stone, Norma Keating, and Evelyn Watson. Better is the collection entitled *Daggers in a Star*, illustrated by Herbert Fouts; but here, too, there is far too much loose diction. Beulah May and Ann Winslow seem considerably the most versatile of the group. *The Quest and the Temples* by Marion MacArthur Laing is a lengthy semi-philosophical poem with a certain felicity of phrase, but not much individuality of substance.

Pan and the Fire-Bird, by Sam M. Steward (*Henry Harrison*, New York. \$1.75)

A debut of indisputable promise is sponsored by Benjamin Musser in the publication of *Pan and the Fire-Bird*, a collection of Greek episodes in poetic prose by a young Columbus, Ohio, college student. With urbanity and charm, color and economy, Sam Steward makes symbolic patterns of words. They are not, perhaps, consummately phrased from a purely vocal point-of-view as are the Biblical rhythms of James Branch Cabell, to whom young Steward apparently owes much; but they have a sensuous, sometimes mellow decadence in places which suggests both the bard of Dumbarton Grange and the author of the *Cena Trimalchionis*. . . . Some of the pieces, especially the dialogues, seem rather too hampered by the traditional and classical grandiloquence, with the result that the effect is lacking in reticence and verbal subtlety. There can be little doubt, however, that Mr. Steward is an author of erotic potentiality; we shall watch his progress with interest.

Brown Fields and Bright Lights, by Whitney Montgomery (*Kaleidoscope*, Dallas, Tex. \$1.50)

It is acknowledgedly difficult for a follower of journalism to slough off the journalese and emerge with wings. In places Whitney Montgomery, veteran newspaper poet and editor of *Kaleidoscope*, a verse magazine published in Dallas, reduces his technique to essentials and puts into words a poignant emotion; among the successful poems in his new volume are such pieces as "Midnight in the City" and "Melting Snow." But there are, we regret to say, a number of trivial pieces included—a paean in praise of Robert W. Service; a rhyme for Roosevelt; a song about Junk; and an apostrophe to the Dying Year. At his worst, Montgomery is a newspaper poet of the popular type, resembling far too closely the much-syndicated Eddie Guest; at his best, he is capable of genuine lyricism. If he can succeed in turning a deaf ear to the

crowd, in avoiding repetition, and in writing his own soul and that alone, Whitney Montgomery will find his place in the sun.

Sheep's Clothing, by Margaret E. Haughawout (privately printed, Pittsburg, Kans.)

This is the series of verses by an author in the pangs of literary childbirth; a careful craftsman, struggling, not always with power, wrestling with the shadow called success. In her desire to give pointed and accurate portraits of persons and situations, Miss Haughawout too often sacrifices imaginative epithet or reticent eloquence. Her best poems are clever and sometimes involved, but her apprenticeship to words has not yet allowed her impassioned conflagration but rigorous dexterity. One has the feeling that here is a poet with promise, whose work will mean more as time goes by.

OLD NICK

One day when I was five years old
The devil tapped me on the arm;
He said he was a friend of mine
And wouldn't do me any harm.

He pinched my cheek and smiled at me,
But I was scared and ran away
To hide behind a bramble bush.
I haven't seen him since that day.

But now with fifty on that five,
I think it would be politic
To act a deal more graciously,
If I should run across old Nick.

—JOHN L. COOK.

THE MULATTO ADDRESSES HIS SAVIOUR

Christ, if God were white
And Mary not. . . .
You'd curse the star-stung night
You were begot!

—SEYMOUR G. LINK.

GOSSIP ON PARNASSUS

At latest report the co-editor of *Star-Dust* had, almost unaided, collected \$1400 towards rehabilitating Wm. Stanley Braithwaite. It is a help, but much more is needed. Deny yourself something and send check to Edith (Mrs. C. B.) Mirick, 3314 Newark St., Washington, D. C. To help Braithwaite is not only assurance of continuation of the greatest of anthologies, it is our public appreciation of the many years of labor of that staunch champion of American poets.—George and Flora Seymour, of Bookfellows fame, are stepping off to Brazil in June. Warm summer! Hoyt Hudson, 27 Linden Lane, Princeton, N. J., will substitute as editor of *The Step Ladder* and *Bookfellows' Anthology*.—Ada Borden Stevens rejoices over her three-weeks stay in bed with grip, as she couldn't wear out the frocks destined for the Pen Women's convention in Washington, during Easter week, where Mrs. Stevens spoke on analyzed rhyme. I had a peep in at a luncheon and meeting or two of the Pen Women; Wm. Griffith was honor guest at their dinner.—James Stephens celebrated his birthday in Dublin with James Joyce, his literary twin (and how different twins can be!), born the same hour of the same day of the same year in the same Irish city.—Ruth Peiter commutes from Toledo to New York. What is distance to those who ride the winged horse?—Morton Zabel, Vincent Starrett and I were judges in the annual poetry contest of the Scribblers of Notre Dame University. The Scribblers have launched a quarterly, *Scrip*. William Knapp, of the Scribblers sent me a large signed photograph for my Rogues' Gallery. Other photographs have come from Edith Mirick, "mother of Star-Dust," and from Kathleen Millay, mailed from Villa Fabia, Juan-les-Pins, Alpes Maritimes.—Dorothy Kruger, author of *Bright Harvest* (Troubadour Press), having lost heavily in Wall Street, will spend an economical summer seeing Europe in de luxe fashion.

The Empire Poetry League has been reorganized and moved to St. George's Hall, Little Russell St., London, W. C. I. In its current *Poetry and the Play*, Mr. B. R. Ward whitewashes Shakespeare's sonnets to "Mr. H. W.," his "fair Youth," by ingenuously explaining they were "written in the nursery and addressed to a baby boy." Noble Mr. Ward, rescuing Will from his "Master-Mistress"!—England has several new periodicals of interest to poets. Humbert Wolfe and James Stephens appear in the first *Week-end Review*, founded by Gerald Barry. Ray, edited in London by Sidney Hunt, is "a miscellany of art, poetry and ideas" (one would suppose poetry included the other two). There is a verse quarterly at 16 Featherstone Bldgs., London, W. C. I., by name *Poetry of To-day*; contributors instead of being paid must themselves buy ten or more copies of their issue at the rate of 2/1 per copy.—Down in Santa Fe Richard Miller has started a new mag called *Whirl*. Probably a combination of poetry and roulette wheel.—*The Poets' Forum*, Estil Alexander Townsend, ed., Howe, Okla., is a monthly, new this year.—New York has *The New World Monthly* (62 W. 37th St.), which includes verse, and *The Miscellany*, another of the bi-

monthly experimental magazines.—*Carillon*, edited by Ruth Mantz at Stanford University, is no kin to the first-born *Carillon* of Washington, D. C., edited by Caroline Giltinan and others. With two *Wills-o'-the-Wisp* and two *Carillons*, it seems godparents are running short of names.

G. K. Chesterton has a series of lectures during May at Notre Dame University. Sr. M. Ignatia, ed. of *The Magnificat*, will give a course in "Writing for the Magazines" at the summer school of Notre Dame.—Clifford Gessler's literary page in the Honolulu *Star-Bulletin* is especially generous to poetry interests. It is one of the finest book-review pages to be found in any newspaper.—Harold Vinal of *Voices* has a very clever list of 21 mimeographed paragraphs, answers to every conceivable query that might be put to harassed editors. If you ask him what happened to your lovely pome, Mr. Vinal sends you the list with No. 16 checked: "Holding material a while longer for further consideration"; if you ask why he hasn't answered your letter of last November, he promptly sends you the list with No. 11 checked: "The editor is in Europe." Only he's not; he's spending the spring and summer at Vinal Haven, Maine. Mr. Vinal had an admirable article in March *Poetry Review* (London), on "The New Lyricism."

There are two new publishing houses of importance in New York, Richard R. Smith, Inc., 12 E. 41st St., and Claude Kendall & Aaron Sussman, Inc., 70 Fifth Ave.—Payson & Clarke has become Brewer & Warren.—The Golden Hind Press is now at 516 Fifth Ave.—Houghton Mifflin Co. are issuing a very sumptuous limited edition of Tennyson. Anything so vulgar as money is not mentioned in the announcement. You'll have to be looked up in Bradstreet before they'll tell you the price.—If you consider Theodore Dreiser a poet, you'll be thrilled to hear he has a poem, just an poem, note, fixed up in leather and things, author-signed, and sold (or is the purchaser sold?) by Horace Liveright for \$17.50.—Henry Harrison, 19 Stuyvesant St., N. Y. City, proposes a series of volumes each to contain the work of 15 poets; \$35 fee from each contributor, in exchange six pages of poems and 25 free copies. Sounds fair enough. The first volume is *Singing Davids*, the second will be *Lyric Invaders*.—Richard Aldington has compiled under Covici-Friede impress an *Imagist Anthology*, including hitherto unpublished work by John Cournos, James Joyce and D. H. Lawrence, and reprints by Ford Madox Ford, Wm. Carlos Williams and others.—Elizabeth Davis Richards sent me a copy of *Thistledown*, a charming brochure of West Virginia verse which she edited and C. A. A. Parker, Medford, Mass., published.—Speaking of anthologies, contributors, especially those who ordered and paid for copies in advance, will be grateful if the compilers of the following collections, scheduled to appear many months ago, will explain their long delay: *Unfamiliar Quotations*, *From Overseas 1928-9*, *Anthology of Short Lyrics*, *Best Poems of Skepticism*, *Some Poems about New York*.

Alan Frederick Pater, ed. of *The Poetry Quarterly* and also of *The Poet and the Critic*, offers through the second named prizes of \$25 for

the best article on poetry, \$25 for the best sonnet, \$15 for the best lyric, \$50 for the best poem irrespective of form, also three \$10 awards and five of \$5 each. Note Mr. Pater's new address, 141 E. 17th St., N. Y. City.—The Mark Twain Soc., Cyril Clemens, Pres., Mayfield, Calif., offers \$10 for the best poem, before June 1st, on Mark Twain. No restrictions.—Miss Lilith Lorraine won the \$10 Rimers' Club prize for a sonnet by a member of the Arizona Poetry Soc.—Mr. T. H. Howe's annual prizes offered through *The Gypsy*, Cincinnati, have been awarded as follows: \$100 lyric priz to John Larus, \$50 sonnet award to Philip Rice, \$50 for free verse to Kathryn MacFarlane; the "unknown donor" \$50 prize went to Bert Cooksley.

—ATTICUS MUS.

NEW CONTRIBUTORS AND OTHERS

Hilliard Wight is a Kansas City, Mo., poet new to our pages; Dorothy MacFarlane resides in Meadill, Okla. Mrs. May Carlton Lord of Glenside, Penna., offers a whimsical child's verse. David Cornel De Jong, born in Holland, now teaches English in Grand Rapids, Mich. Ronald Walker Barr returns to our pages after a long absence; he lives in Toledo, Ohio, and is an aviator. Borghild Lee and Ethel Romig Fuller are both from Portland, Ore. G. Ersyl Manahan is in Wellington, Kansas. Isaac Benjamin of Philadelphia, and William Wright of Warren, are both residents of Pennsylvania.

SECOND \$25 BI-MONTHLY AWARD

The Second Bi-monthly Award for the best poem appearing in each issue of *Bozart and Contemporary Verse*, is hereby announced to Robert P. Tristram Coffin for his group of two poems in this issue: "The Man Who Broke Three Hearts," and "People in High Houses." Mr. Coffin, author of *The Golden Falcon* (Macmillan), lives in New York state.

